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entire musical arrangements were placed under the sole control of Mr. Costa; acting on his behalf was the committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society, who placed their official staff at the disposal of the directors for the occasion. The copies for the music were furnished also by the society—the whole being expressly arranged for the occasion by Mr. Costa.

Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*. From Mr. Chorley's *Modern German Music*. Smith and Elder, Cornhill.

By six o'clock A.M. on the first morning of the Festival, there was no possibility of sleeping in Brunswick. Not only was the entire "Blue Angel" stirring and clamorous for its breakfast—the whole town was blithely alive. In every room of the opposite four-story house, which seemed nodding into my little light chamber, the work of adorning was busily going on;—in one window, the first flourish of the razor; in another, the last shoulder-knot pinned on, or the sash tied. But neither gentlemen nor ladies denied themselves the pleasure of throwing wide the casements, and leaning out into the fresh autumnal sunshine, so often as the frequent sound of creaking springs and jingling wheels, the leisurely trot of horses, or the eager bawling of their drivers, announced that another cargo of pleasers was coming in to enjoy the execution of Mendelssohn's *St. Paul*.

The whole assembly of orchestra and audience was cemented by one sympathetic desire to honor a great musician. All eyes waited Mendelssohn's—not The Duke's—coming. His conductor's desk was wreathed with a fresh garland of flowers. Upon it, beside the score of his Oratorio, was laid another more delicate bouquet ready for his use, and, if I mistake not, for his refreshment, a paper cornucopia of those dainties in which every good German housewife is so skilful. We should laugh at these *petits soins* in London. At Brunswick they were pretty, because hearty and natural.

Precisely at ten o'clock the performance began. I had heard the oratorio of *St. Paul* two or three times before, but had never thoroughly enjoyed it till then. There was much, of course, in time, place, and sympathy. What caviller against German crudity and mysticism could have resisted the *Euryanthe*, conducted by Weber at Vienna?—and I should feel small patience with the most conscientious and intellectual contemner of Italian meretriciousness who at Venice could remain cold to the *Semiramide* of Rossini, performed under the auspices of "Il Maestro" himself! But, allowing for these influences as largely as may be required, there is little modern music which gains so much with every subsequent hearing as that of the *St. Paul*. How forcible in their simple truth are its effects! How thrillingly expressed by the multiplication of treble voices and wind instruments, is the celestial apparition in the scene of Saul's conversion! How ferociously real are the cries of the multitude at the stoning of St. Stephen! How melodious, in its sweet holiness of consolation, is the funeral chorus, "O happy and blest are they," when the proto-martyr is laid in his grave! There is a little design in *chiaroscuro*, by Martin, of the burial of Sarah in the cave of Macpelah—the deep shadows and struggling lights of which, around the group of mourners bending reveren-

tially over the dust of the departed, never fail to come back to me upon the deliciously undulating accompaniment, and the grave but soothing chant of the voices of that chorus. Nor less dramatically has the composer thrown himself into the hymn of adoration given to the heathen, when, astounded by the miraculous powers of the Apostles, "they called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercurius; and the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people." The frieze of some Grecian temple, with its choral dancers, and its flower-decked altar, is not further in character from some *Pieta*, or martyrdom of Christian art, than the delicious strain, "O be gracious, ye immortals," from the funeral anthem just mentioned, or from that serenely exulting strain of hope, "How lovely are the messengers!"

In adverting to some of the claims of *St. Paul* on the future, the scope it gives to the principal singers must not be forgotten. Though it affords less opportunity for separate display than most of Handel's oratorios, it still contains a song of the very highest order, for each voice of the vocal quartett—for the *soprano*, the air "Jerusalem;" for the *contralto*, that delicious *arioso*, "But the Lord is mindful of his own;" for the *basso*, the scene, "O God, have mercy upon me;" and for the *tenor*, the *cantabile*, "Be thou faithful unto death!" than which Handel himself has hardly left us a tenor air deeper or more earnest in its expressiveness. Every song, moreover, is not only tempting to declaim, but agreeable to sing. From the date of the composition of this oratorio till the last hour of his life, Mendelssohn was increasingly anxious to produce effect by the ease, beauty, and practicability of his vocal writing. The above four songs were the work of happy hours; and their success may have contributed to that mellowing of his style, and simplification of his manner, which may be traced through the works of his short life.—But this is anticipating.

In some respects the performance of *St. Paul* must have satisfied its author. The chorus was extremely good, clear in the delivery of its tone, and its precision to be inferred from the tremendous sibilation on certain words—to an amount of *ssss-sforzando*, rarely, in 1839, to be remarked at home, even in the performance of the choruses, "For unto us a child is born," or, "From the censer,"—both favorites with English chorus-singers, both full of the dangerous sound. It was a great relief to be delivered from male counter-tenors, the quartett gaining by the substitution of *contralti*, which indeed are stronger upon the characteristic notes—the deepest—of their part, while the highest are attained without that nasality and effort which all men (Rubini perhaps excepted) must use, when in *falsetto* approaching the *soprano* register. On the other hand, the absence of an organ to support and blend the voices, was as great a loss as the substitution just praised was a gain. In the fugue at the opening of the second part, and in most of the choruses, this was sadly felt. It is one of the few English indispensables which the Germans would do well to naturalize, and for the want of which, in grand sacred music, not even the superiority of their orchestras, nor the heartiness of zeal, such as characterized every chord of the Brunswick chorus, can altogether satisfactorily compensate.